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A TREATISE ON ELECTRIC LAW, COMPRISING THE LAW GOVERNING ALL ELECTRIC CORPORATIONS, USES AND APPLIANCES, ALSO ALL RELATIVE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE RIGHTS. Second Edition. By Joseph A. Joyce and Howard C. Joyce. Two Volumes. New York: Banks Law Publishing Co. 1907. Pp. cxc, 1774.

The modern tendency to produce legal treatises dealing with a branch of the law included within empirical rather than analytical boundaries is well illustrated by Joyce on Electrical Law. From a legal standpoint there is no real reason, for example, why cases dealing with the rights and duties of electric light corporations should be grouped together merely because they furnish illumination by means of filaments or carbons heated by the passage of an electric current. However there is a real basis of convenience in bringing together within two volumes a discussion of every case in which persons or corporations dealing in or utilizing electricity are concerned, because it is of course true that the resulting problems represent a special class when considered from the purely business standpoint.

The authors have been unusually successful. The earlier edition has been thoroughly gone over and brought down to date by the introduction of much new material. So recent has been the revision that an extended section has been included dealing with the question of wireless telegraphy. The work also includes a very careful examination of the questions arising under the Post Roads Acts and of the Interstate Commerce clause of the Federal Constitution (Chapter IV.) and of the corporate powers of telegraph, telephone and electric light companies (Chapter XIII.). The vexed question as to whether and under what circumstances an electric light telegraph or telephone line constitutes an additional burden on the highway for which an abutting owner may claim compensation (See Sec. 296, sq.) is adequately treated. In connection with this discussion it is curious that the latest Pennsylvania Supreme Court case, *Brown vs. Radnor Electric, &c., Co.*, 208 Pa. 453 (1904) has not been noted, while a country court case has been referred to in some detail (Sec. 331a).

In the first part of the second volume there is a painstaking discussion of the intricate legal problems presented by induced and interfering currents.

The discussion of such questions as injuries to passengers on electric cars, the abuse of authority by street railway employees, &c., could have profitably been omitted as these

subjects are adequately covered by existing works and the mere fact that an electric current is the motive power by which the car is propelled, does not bring these cases within any proper meaning of Electric Law. On the other hand if a chapter had been added on the elementary technique of Applied Electricity it would have been of great assistance to the busy practitioner, who in cases involving the preparation or interpretation of every-day electric contracts is bewildered as to the meaning of the most ordinary terms and in the examination of witnesses in suits involving the overloading of motors, &c., is hopelessly perplexed by the words of even "one syllable" in electrical nomenclature.

*R. D. J.*

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**LEGAL ESSAYS.** By James Bradley Thayer, LL.D. Edited by Ezra Ripley Thayer. Boston: Boston Cook Company. 1908. Pp. xvi, 402.

This collection of Legal Essays, of the late Professor Thayer, will be of universal interest to the legal profession. It contains a number of papers prepared by Professor Thayer for delivery on special occasions and hitherto unpublished, together with others published from time to time in the *Harvard Law Review*, and elsewhere. Ezra Ripley Thayer, who has collected his father's essays for publication, states in the preface that no changes have been made in the original except the occasional correction of a clerical error. The editor has prefaced such essay with a short account of the occasion of its original publication or delivery. "The Origin and Scope of the American Doctrine of Constitutional Law" is an address given before the Congress on Jurisprudence and Law Reform, at the World's Fair, at Chicago, on August 9, 1893. Professor Thayer discussed before this Congress the power of the American Judiciary to declare legislative Acts unconstitutional. The essay on "Advisory Opinions" or opinions in which the Judiciary advises the Legislative branch of the government, was written at the request of Chief Justice Bradley, of Rhode Island. The history of this practice in the United States is outlined and the legal quality of such opinions discussed.

This book of essays is more than a set of legal discussions. It shows the human side of Professor Thayer, in the addresses and essays he prepared and delivered before non-professional audiences. In the essay entitled, "The People Without Law,"